

Beneath Blue Skies
and Gray Poems

By INGRAM CROCKETT



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BENEATH BLUE
SKIES *and* GRAY

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BENEATH
BLUE SKIES
AND GRAY

POEMS BY
Ingram Crockett



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To My Wife *and*
To My Mother's Memory

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Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A Book of Poems

In This is the spot where they in beauty grew ;
Haunts But now the sere leaves rustle 'neath our feet
of Our roses dead ; and yet in mem'ry sweet
Wildrose As on that day when walking, love, with you,
 We saw them standing here empearled with dew,
 Upon the marge of that wide sea of wheat
 Whose mellow ripples musically beat
 The golden minutes under June's deep blue.
 So let us keep them, all the roses rare
 That with their loveliness make glad our day :
 What matter then, for wintry days of care,
 What matter, then, if skies be blue or gray,
 Our hearts shall be like gardens very fair
 Where fragrant blossoms shall be found alway.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The When God pronounced his work all good
Oak He must have thought of the old oak wood,
Wood Of the old oak wood on an autumn day
With the sunshine goldening all that way
And the glistening leaves of red and brown
Quietly, dreamily drifting down.

He must have thought of the redbird there
With wings a-flash thro' the amber air,
Of the bowed brown weeds that humbly wait
For the touch of the frost that soon or late
Will bring them death: of the asters white
In starry clumps on the hillside bright.

And the bending plumes of the golden-rod
All must have been in the thought of God
And the woodpecker's music, clear and strong,
Tapped on a dead limb all day long,
And the silken gossamers lightly spun
Floss of gold from the loom o' the sun.

And he must have heard the meadow-lark sing
Far off there in the world's first Spring,
The meadow-lark's song o'er the hilltop rise
To the dreamer standing with misty eyes
At the edge of the wood, and listening lone
To the flutes of memory faintly blown.

A Book of Poems

The The west is glowing crimson 'neath the feet
Garden Of her the beautiful, the passing Day,
of And, softly bright, the new moon lights the way
Night Into Night's garden that is dewy sweet
With blossoming stars : where bright browed visions meet
And in love's converse thro' the quiet stray
'To where the fountains of the wind at play
Make pleasant music. Time, with slower beat
Of thy strong wings pass o'er this garden fair !
Nay, rest thee here, and haply lost in dreams
Thou wilt forget some wildrose blooming long
To gladden earth, some young heart void of care.
Hark ! Can'st thou hasten when 'neath silvery beams
Thou hearest the rapture of the thrushes' song ?

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

In the From out the cold vast of the night
Night I heard it crying,
And thro' bare trees the moon stole white
A ghostly thing !

I asked the wind, the veiled stars,
The clouds, on flying,
“ What voice is this whose wailing mars
Sleep's bourgeoning ? ”

And my heart replied : “ 'Tis a memory,
In fear undying,
That vainly from itself would flee —
A cursed thing ! ”

A Book of Poems

The Gray bards of Winter standing calm and still
Winter Upon the hillside, tell me all your dreams
Oaks For I am weary and the world meseems,
For all its gospel, is than you more chill.
I come in weakness, lift me up until
I breathe your vigorous air lit with faint gleams
Of frosty sunshine. See the far-off streams
And to your wind-songs feel my pulses thrill.
Ah, blessed bards that truest comrades all
Know the good ministry of stars and sun,
In waiting restful while the world doth toil !
Unto your loving strength my soul doth call.
O make me strong that I may be as one
With peace communing 'midst the world's turmoil.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The The moon, a slender silver horn,
Vision Gleams on the rosy-baldricked morn,
And, milky white, the mists below
From frosty fields are rising slow,
And with a rapture as of Spring
The thrushes in the treetops sing.

The waiting world is very still
Before that vision on the hill,
That vision that is never old,
Of Morning with her bow of gold,
And in a golden leash the Sun
Leaping with eagerness to run.

Oh, hark ! the silver horn is blown,
Its witchery is round me thrown ;
I saw it touch the Morning's lips
Held in her rosy finger-tips,
The world is very still to hear
That fairy music faint and clear.

A Book of Poems

Black-eyed Susans Tawn gypsy children of late Summer days
Camping beside the meadow where the sun
Wakes hot, wild perfume and bright webs are spun,
Soft silken pitfalls of the grassy ways,
Wherein you laugh to see the bees that praise
Your loveliness, fall blundering, in elfish fun
Nodding your heads to see them thus undone
Or dancing with the wind in hoydenish plays.
Soon will the Frost, freebooter, pitiless,
March down upon you stealthily at night
And you be captive, in your helplessness
Standing before him whose one law is might;
Serving in tatters, suffering his caress,
And left to perish when his hordes take flight.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

On The tall catalpas, all in white, lean
Green far out o'er the stream ;
River In little fleets their blossoms float where
runs a silvery gleam ;
The halcyon falls, a flash of blue, the
hawk in circles slow
Mounts up and up until he's lost far
in the golden glow.
O ho, hoi ho, boys walk along!
O ho, hoi ho, boys walk along!
The sunlight smites the river hard, its
ripples flash a-fire,
A murmuring music's in the leaves,
a glad æolian lyre,
A fisher sits beneath the shade, the
sunlight sifting thro'
Below, above, he sees the clouds float
softly in the blue.
O ho, hoi ho, boys walk along!
O ho, hoi ho, boys walk along!
A fret of silver runs across the
current's molten gold,
The fingers of the wind are there in
merry touch and bold,
The sweet-brier dances to the tune
the wind and ripples play

A Book of Poems

On There at the bankside 'midst the ferns ;
Green and all the hazels sway.

River *Oh, walk along, boys, walk along!*

(Continued) *We'll get there by and by, walk along!*

The raft comes slowly round the bend, its
long sweep dripping light

As lifted, dipped, by sinewy arms, it
steers the raft aright ;

The raftmen's tent is cool and white —
there comes a whiff of smoke,

The last, pure fragrant offering of hickory
or oak.

Oh, walk along, boys, walk along!

Say, hurry up your dinner, walk along!

O days beneath the bright June sky,

O days so fair and fleet !

Like blossoms treasured in a book, that
faded yet are sweet !

O rugged raftmen at the sweep with
brown bare arms and strong,

There is a chord in memory that
vibrates to your song !

O ho, hoi ho, boys walk along!

We'll get there by and by, walk along!

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Beauty When round the white, uplifted, holy brow
Of some tall peak a halo of pale gold
Thro' gathering dusk, doth rapturously hold
Our eyes and thoughts, and lift us from the slough
Of sordidness that Beauty may endow
Us richly with her treasures manifold,
Shall we in marts where lives are bought and sold
Straightway forget her in some Mammon vow?
Shall we shut out the music of the sea?
Or slight the flowers that fair hands upreach
Like little children, prattlers at the knee
Of Nature, mother eloquent to teach?
Ah, having all things, poor indeed were we
Undowered of Beauty, knowing not her speech.

A Book of Poems

A Ah, how I love this quiet way
Walk That leads me from the town
at That leads me from its smoky sway
Sunset To pleasant meadows, brown.

The woods are flecked with red and gold
The willowed creek is low,
And in its shadows, dank and cold,
The Cardinal flowers glow.

The hoary fences, misers, count
Their stores of golden-rod,
The milkweed's wingéd children mount
From many a silken pod.

Broad fields are purple with the plumes
Of sinewy ironweeds,
And roses that were crowned with blooms,
Wear strings of coral beads.

The silent couriers of the Dusk
Wait in the shadows deep;
The tall corn, still in untorn husk,
Seems drowsing into sleep.

Now hangs the red globe of the sun
Upon the brink of night;
And silently the mists are spun
In gossamers of white.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A The grass is crisp beneath my feet,

Walk A leaf is shaken down ;

at The stars come out—the way is sweet

Sunset That leads me back to town.

(Continued)

That leads me back to home and her

Whose love o'er all I prize,

Who welcomes me with lips of myrrh,

And smiles and love-lit eyes.

A Book of Poems

Here Here pours the creek its bubbled tide
In circling currents, slow,
The deer-berries nodding at its side
Sun-kissed are all aglow.

Here willows in long olive lines
Dance to the water's tune,
And, fragrantly, from hidden shrines
Are wafted prayers for June.

Here cobweb bridges sway and swing
Beneath the Wind's light tread;
And, touched by some sweet thought of Spring,
The maple buds turn red.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A The silvery pipes of sparrows softly blown
Cloister From rose and holly thickets, and the flute
Of a meadow-lark from fields that else are mute —
And in the oaks the wind's low monotone,
And thoughts that thrill me as I walk alone —
Thoughts sweeter than the music of a lute
Swept by light hands. No triflers here dispute
With jangling voices over the unknown,
Nor wild, rough words jar on the strings of peace
That breathe the melody of true content ;
But faith is crystal clear and joy is deep :
For here my God doth me a cloister keep
Near to the hills where Heaven and earth are blent
And all the discords of the dark world cease.

A Book of Poems

Autumn O gentle days of Autumn !

Days O holy days of gray !

That with an inner rapture

In meditation stray —

How peaceful 'tis to follow

With you to lead the way.

To follow where the sumacs

Like candelabra, red,

Light brakes of brier and hazel,

And leaves are thickly spread

A carpet, russet-golden,

That rustles to the tread —

Through flower-haunted places

In misty meadows, low,

Or by the winding creek side

To hear the waters flow —

The happy waters singing

A song that poets know.

Or up the steeps of hillsides

Thro' pearly-tinted grays

Of sweet life-everlasting,

To see the mellow haze

Far breathéd o'er the landscape —

A quiet world that prays.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Autumn But sweetest when I follow

Days With you, and fails the light

(Continued) Far in the magic westland,
And gently comes the night,
And trembling on her bosom
One little star of white —

To hear a tender message,
A spirit message clear —
A voice from out the meadows
Thro' mists that falter near,
That holds me as 'twere music
Of Heaven upon my ear.

A bird, and yet a spirit
Of time long, long ago,
Who, by the shore of twilight
Beneath the day's last glow,
Doth on the pipes of mem'ry
A lovely flute-call blow.

A Book of Poems

A I hear it oft in the deep o' the night,
Voice *Calling, calling to me,*
When laughter has passed, love, laughter, and light.
 Calling, calling to me.

What does it want in the night so deep?
 Calling, calling to me.
Why does it moan in the halls o' sleep?
 Calling, calling to me.

I cannot go for the way is cold
 Calling, calling to me.
Leading down by the oak tree, old.
 Calling, calling to me.

I cannot go for fresh is the sod
 Calling, calling to me.
There where the thick-leaved hazels nod.
 Calling, calling to me.

What have I done, O God, in the way?
 Calling, calling to me.
There where the thick-leaved hazels sway?
 Calling, calling to me.

Why does the moon wear a shroud to-night?
 Calling, calling to me.
O God, must I look on that face so white
 Calling, calling to me?

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Redwing Wingéd flame and flute of Spring,
You the woodlands hear !
Tips of twigs are shining clear,
And the blackbirds sing.

March's color-bearer, true,
Lo, the tents of green !
And the maple's fires between,
Bright to welcome you.

Lover of the misty sky
And the golden shower !
Warder of the budding hour
When new dreams are nigh —

Tell me when you came, and how,
In what magic way ?
Yesterday the world was gray,
It is rainbowed now !

Ah, to follow where you go
On your joyous flight !
Kindling, with your wings of light,
Flowers on meadows low.

Wingéd flame and flute of Spring,
Happy, we who hear !
While the bright'ning buds appear,
And the blackbirds sing.

A Book of Poems

The Seraphic vision! Day is done, and see!
Shining The hosts of God with shining wings outspread
Hosts Filling the world with glory, upward led
To holy heights where burns eternally
The white, unwavering flame of purity.
Or is this that great company of dead
Which passed in darkness, now transfiguréd
In wondrous beauty, beckoning to me?
I know not now, but One doth surely speak
Out of the rainbow, from the stars of Night,
And from the splendor of this passing light:
And Him, and Him alone, my soul doth seek.
Surely He calls me thro' these visions bright,
Surely He waits me on some heavenly peak.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The Far overhead the icy West wind roars,
Quiet Whipping the tree-tops with his furious lash
Cham- Till all the creaking boughs together clash.
bers But here the brown leaves on the windless floors
Lie all unruffled, and the sycamores
That love the streams, with many a hardened ash
Moss-boled, unmindful of the crash
Above them, rise from peaceful shores.
Here broods the spirit of eternal peace
Giving the benison of golden calm,
While wildest storms break on the world above.
These are the deeps where strife and clamor cease,
The Quiet Chambers odorous with balm
That speak the restfulness of God's own love.

A Book of Poems

A
Longing

A longing, strange and sweet,
Comes o'er me when I hear
That guiding call so clear
From noiseless wings that beat —
Wedging their way to rest
Far in the charmed west,
By some calm water, deep,
By some still, mist-hid stream where
dwelleth sleep.

Ah, may I, too, some day
Find the far happy isles,
Where after weary miles
I shall with loved ones stay ;
And know without surcease
The blessedness of peace.
Yea, end this cloudy quest
In some clear, rainbow land where
all is rest.

O longing strange and sweet !
Beyond this mystery
My Leader calls to me :
To bear me up and on
Where my beloved are gone.
Breaks now a clearer light —
I hear His call and know that all
is right.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A O spirit of the Winter wind, of gray
Call clouds hanging low,
The message that you bring to me is
clearest that I know —
And I will follow where you lead
adown the wooded steep
Where in the winding hollows lie the
brown leaves fast asleep.

And you shall tell me of your dreams
and I will tell you mine,
While listening to that song I love, the
wind-song of the pine ;
Ah, yes, in God's wide chambers where
the light is full and free
Yet softly shining thro' the haze of life's
old mystery.

O spirit of the Winter wind I hear you
calling now :
“ Come out ! come out ! ” you seem to say,
“ beneath the leafless bough !
Where bloom the flowers of the frost
in all their crystal grace,
And tangled in the ironweeds are webs
of snowy lace.”

A Book of Poems

A I hear the waters flowing over ice
Call like fluted pearl,

(Continued) The wild ducks northward beat their way,
the plovers round me skirl;
And with his rhythmic hammer taps the
flicker all the day,
And woods are weft with colors of
the redbird and the jay.

The world is housed, but you and I
may wander where we will,
And list the music of the woods, or low,
or high and shrill —
Or in the meadow lie at rest among the
broomsedge, tall,
And hear, far-off, a spirit voice, the
meadow-lark's clear call.

Glad spirit of the Winter wind I hear
you calling now :
“ Come out ! come out ! ” you seem to say,
“ and keep with me a vow !
For we must make a pilgrimage
to worship at a shrine
Deep in the woods, where ever sounds
the wind-song of the pine.”

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The Down sinks the glowing red disc of the sun
Day Behind the dark oak wood, and floating bright,
is Done Gold-roseate bubbles on the brim of night,
The little clouds evanish one by one,
And twilight deepens and The Day is Done.
The Day is Done, and with its passing light
How much of weariness, how much of blight
That in the morning with its tasks begun
Our hearts undreamed of. Ah, me, good is rest !
Profoundest rest without a thought or dream,
Without a glimmer of the day to be,
Without a memory of the strife, the quest.
Small thought the toiler has for morning's beam
But only from his labor to be free.

A Book of Poems

The A little while at sundown's splendid gate
Passing She lingering stood, and looked adown the way
of Day Her feet had trod, and, looking, seemed to pray
For her dear hills, in love compassionate —
For her dear hills who thro' the years would wait
To greet her coming, true to her for aye —
Forgetting her not among the gay
Succeeding days — a memory consecrate.
And in great tenderness she gently laid
Bright golden chaplets on each brow, and, slow,
All wrapped in rosy mists did softly fade
Into the past, yet left an afterglow
Of wondrous beauty whereon white stars made
A wide-meshed net of splendor hanging low.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Eventide The romping winds that swiftly pass
 Make waves and dimples in the grass.

 The wheatfield, purpling fold on fold,
 Is starred with sheaves of harvest gold.

 New carpeted from Summer's loom
 The meadows pink with clover bloom.

 The willows downy lint of white
 Is shaken windward silken bright.

 A child's shrill cry, a far-off song
 Upon the silence float along.

 The dusky robes of nearing Night
 Are softly fringed with orange light.

 And in the linden hanging low
 Diana's sharp-tipped silver bow.

A Book of Poems

Late The garnered fields are betted round
After: With leafless woods of gray,
noon in And to the rhythm of keen winds
November The branches sway.
ber
O'er head, on lazy loitering wings,
Against a cloud-ribbed sky,
With out-craned necks and mocking caws
The crows flock by.

The tented army of the corn
Waits in the lowlands, brown,
The sun drops hazily behind
The smoke-wreathed town.

Now quiet hushes with mute touch
The whisper'ng grasses, tall,
And, standing tiptoe, waits to catch
Night's first foot-fall.

A bar of red gold gleams athwart
The west and groweth dim
And fades, and darkness overflows
Deep twilight's brim.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A There comes a vision of a bright spot cleared
Clearing Within a deep, deep wood of oak and pine,
 A little cabin where wild grape-vines twine,
 And gourds for swallows on a tall pole reared
 Sway in the breeze : a memory endeared
 By youth's associations, clear sunshine
 That thro' life's clouded days has e'er been mine
 And with its gladness has my pathway cheered.
 A little clearing wherein woodsmoke curled
 In fragrant incense from a happy hearth,
 And melted softly in the blue above.
 A little home uncaring of the world,
 Of pleasant books, of health, of faith, of mirth,
 Wherein there dwelt the blessed angel Love.

A Book of Poems

The Th' expectant wood that late had gentler grown
Cross Watched, waiting for the advent of the Spring;
The sun hung low, I heard the robins sing,
And far-off bells across the meadows blown;
The world was very still, and I, alone,
Walking slowly homeward with my thoughts awing
To seek the mystery of the soul, to bring
Some certain token from that land unknown.
When lo! from out the west a ray of gold
Far-reaching, glorious, touched a distant spire
And bright'ning upward, gleamed, a holy fire,
Upon The Cross. O God of love untold
Cannot we trust Thee that this deep desire
Shall find fruition when Thy gates unfold!

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Frost- The sycamores' white branches are
time tipped with yellow leaves,
The sparrows gossip cozily beneath
the red-haw's eaves,
The poison-oak shoots slender flame
up thro' the poplar's gold,
And the aspens are a-shiver at the
step of coming Cold.

The blackgums glow in purple along
the woodland's edge,
The reddening osage-oranges lie thick
beneath the hedge,
The sumacs, scarlet-coated, nod by
the gray fence-rows,
And clematis, as white as snow,
across the fencetop flows.

The silver silken gossamers are
twinkling on the hill,
And with a gentle loneliness the fields
are all athrill,
There's stubble in the cornfields,
and mottled gold and brown
Of rich tobacco in the barns — and
fleets of thistledown.

A Book of Poems

Frost- The yellow plumes of golden-rod are
time turned to grayish white ;
(Continued) The creek is low, its stilly pools
with fallen leaves are bright ;
The hickory-nuts and acorns lie
thick upon the ground,
And wild grapes hang along the
limbs of thickets they have bound.

O, now, 'tis sweet at dusk to hear
the whistle of the quail ;
To walk beneath the day's last glow
knee-deep in grasses pale ;
To hear the low of cattle, and the
clatter of the bars ;
To watch the crystal twinkle of the
first of many stars.

And in the morning early, when the
east is all a-tinge
With the glory of the coming, when
beyond the woodland's fringe
In silence wells the beauty of the
day-spring flowing near,
And falters down the hoary hills
in quiet white and clear —

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Frost- Oh, then, when robins twitter and the
time wrens are chirping nigh,
(Continued) And maples flash another dawn to
greet the dawn on high,
There's ecstasy in breathing, yes
a tang in all the air,
A rapture in the very blood that
makes one laugh at care.

Oh, lusty Frost-time, kiss the leaves
and turn them rosy red!
And let all stars the brighter be that
shine out overhead,
And trail the mists like silver
scarfs across the meadows, low,
And over all the glamour of thy
happy presence throw.

A Book of Poems

The Upon the elms there lay a mist of green,
first The maple buds were red, the fallowed fields
Black: Were smoking in the sunlight, and the wealds
bird Were softer grown, and winds, no longer keen,
Breathed life into the violets; clouds serene
Were drifting in the blue, their shadow keels
Dark'ning the meadows, where, with song that steals
From some far spirit land, the lark is seen.
Then sang the blackbird joyously a-swing
Upon a willow o'er a bubbled stream,
The sunlight glinting on his burnished wing,
His song the echo of a sylvan dream
Of some delightful clime where flowers fling
Their golden largess to the Constant Spring.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Ceres The amber wheat, the silvery rye
 Flowed down on either side
The brambled fence ; the western sky
 Was dappled far and wide.

With shining flecks of golden light,
 And one white, trembling star
Looked out upon the sea of Night
 Across a rosy bar.

The moon, a thread of silver, hung
 Low tangled in the trees,
And dimpling grasses softly sung
 The lyrics of the breeze.

Then, while the rosy light grew less
 And faded from the blue,
Came Ceres thro' the quietness
 With fragrant dusk and dew.

A Book of Poems

A O mighty Cloud above yon wooded slope,
Cloud Thy garments golden tinted, art thou he
Whom late I saw in warlike panoply,
The fierce sword flashing, with whom none might cope?
Behold thou seemest an angel, now, of Hope
In dazzling raiment, beckoning to me
On heavenlier heights to follow after thee
At whose command the gates of morning ope!
Ah, mock me not, nor lead me on to shake
Thy awful thunders o'er my helpless head!
But be thou tender as thou seemest now;
And 'neath thy shining wings a shelter make.
Smile thou upon me lest I be afraid
And wear, for me, Love's aureole on thy brow.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Come! Come! the lusty morning star
Pales above a rosy bar!
Redbuds purple, dogwoods white,
Glimmer thro' the faery light.
Thro' the greening meadow, wide,
Flows the mist a silver tide;
Passion breathéd whisperings,
Love songs that the robin sings,
Rainbow dewdrops twinkling new
Golden clouds and deeps o' blue —
These shall lead us, these shall bring
Laughter dimpled hopes of Spring.

A Book of Poems

Whate'er Whate'er of agony of heart be mine,
Befalls Whate'er of labor ere my race is run,
Me Of weary darkness ere my day be done —
I shall remember how the dear stars shine :
The mystic music of the wind and pine,
The unspeakable glory of the passing sun,
The gossamers in looms of Morning spun,
And, where I worshiped, the deep woodland shrine.
I shall remember to my latest breath —
And may I hear the vesper sparrow sing
In passing, and behold the sunset light
Even unto the very gate of death !
And after that — dear God I pray Thee bring
These that I love unto me thro' the night.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Cow Music of quiet lanes, O mellow bells,
Bells I follow where you lead adown the way
Unto the creek where nods the drowsy day
Lulled by light ripples, and the blue flag tells
Her dreams unto the dragon-fly — where dwells
The heron, sage, whose sober thoughts ne'er stray
To laughing waters or the notes you play
O golden voices ringing thro' the dells!
No poet, he, but cold philosopher!
Leave him, lead on, the dew begins to fall,
A clear voice calls us from the trysting bars.
The meadows, hills, are one soft fragrant blur,
And in the rose, above the wood's dark wall,
Trembling like dewdrops shine the early stars.

A Book of Poems

At the
Bend
of the
Creek

Snow petals lay
On the grasses, gray,
At the bend of the creek where the waters tinkled
Softly as wire
Under ice, like pearl,
All fluted and curled and frost besprinkled. .

Laughters that sleep
In the current, deep,
Soft dappled with shadows of glistening umber,
Bubbled, awake,
At the pebbly break,
Rippled, and sank once more into slumber.

And a redbird came,
Like a shaft of flame
Shot suddenly down thro' the silence and whiteness ;
And a quail piped clear
From a cornfield near,
Then dusk, and stars, and the night's cold brightness.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The I saw, when the wind of the west blew free,
Antilles Gold-clustered in a silver sea,
of the The fair Antilles of the sky
Sky That off the coast of sundown lie —
Gold-clustered, with an inner light,
Above the flowing tide of Night.

The charmed waves go singing there,
A chastened glory fills the air,
And song is crowned, and ever swells
Her praise as sweet as silver bells,
And thro' a vale that dreamers know
The poppy-broidered rivers flow.

And on a level spot is seen
A trysting place of beryl green,
Where fragrant drifts of sunny snows
Are touched with tints of pearl and rose
O'er-topped by that transcendent peak
Of perfectness that poets seek.

And in that realm of faery dwell,
In gardens bright with asphodel,
The souls of poets past the scorn,
To sweeter life, thro' death, new-born,
And beauty leads them evermore
Along a music-haunted shore.

A Book of Poems

Shadow Gray clouds hang o'er the fallen sun,
And meadow-lark's flutes are faintly blown
From far meads, o'er the cornfields, dun,
Lying low and lone.

Fine and thin are the mist-shrouds spun
By Night's cold hands now the day has flown,
Shrouds all white for the cornfields, dun,
Lying low and lone.

Stillness : save where the little streams run
Whisperingly, and the wind makes moan ;
And darkness bows o'er the cornfields, dun,
Lying low and lone.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The The rain, from shining rainbowed skies,
Clover Blew soft against my cheek,
Blossom I had gone forth into the fields
 Their restfulness to seek —
 And stood where I could hear the low
 Clear carol of the creek.

The clover blossom by the way
 Bent down to kiss my feet,
But I, in all my sinfulness,
 I could not think it meet —
I worthy to but touch the hem
 Of robe so pure and sweet.

And by the clover blossom, there,
 I prayed that I might be
As worthy ; that my Lord might come
 In tender love to me,
And on me place the perfect grace
 Of lowly purity.

A Book of Poems

A A sadness brooded o'er the earth, the sky
Prophecy Was one dull blur, the silent, sentinel trees
 Upon the upland, mist-wreathed to their knees,
 Seemed watching ever for young Hope gone by
 With all her trains of happy minstrelsy—
 The bright-eyed smiling hours, the birds, the bees,
 And brooks that know all artless melodies
 And all the forest children fair and shy.
 When suddenly from out the mist there came
 A flute-like note : so true, so clear, so sweet —
 Such as the thickets know when wingéd flame
 The cardinal comes his own true love to greet.
 Ah, welcome prophecy ! Let sadness claim
 The earth awhile — soon Spring and I shall meet.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The Pale sunshine flickers in the dewy brake
Vireo Beside the creek where liriodendrons, tall,
Lift high their golden cups, and raindrops fall
Like splendid jewels that the breezes shake
From rainbowed skies, and vireo doth make
The woods delightful with his mellow call —
A music of sweet reeds that filleth all
The leafy chambers, and bright dreams awake.
Far off the world seems to me, sitting here
O'er-arched with delicate green, and on my heart
A great joy falls, for I am one of you
O trees, O stream, O vireo singing clear !
Escaped forever from the noisy mart,
A white cloud dreaming in the tranquil blue.

A Book of Poems

The The dusk is deepening, and the wizard stars
Dusk is That set adrift all dreams and mysteries
Deepen- Walk on the marge of Night ; no discord mars
ing The quiet hour's clear pulsing harmonies,
 The beat of innumerable lives in grass and trees.

Hushed is cicada ; when the level light
Failed in the treetops, sank to earth's wide rim,
His shrill voice ceased ; then did the crickets smite
Their harps in unison in solemn hymn,
Lighted by dewdrops in leaf-chambers dim.

Dost hear Lord God these myriad voices small,
Mine own with theirs, that cry here in the dark,
And pass with Summer, pass beyond recall
As in the night an outward-flying spark.
These little lives of ours dost care to mark?

Why should we know? the Summer night is sweet,
The stars are fair, love's lips are very near —
Why should we know if we with Thee shall meet?
These simple songs of ours to us are dear
Would they be sweeter knowing Thou dost hear?

These simple songs of ours, we'll sing them o'er
And joy in one another — who can see
Beyond the portal of that dark "No More?"
The future is all shadow — let it be.
If Thou art Love 'twill brighten unto Thee.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A Spirit Immortal surely this must be
Sunset A vision of Thy glory : on the hills
A beauty not of earth, the light that fills
The chambers of Thy presence eternally !
And in this quiet Thou art near to me,
Yea, surely 'tis Thy very touch that stills
My soul's unrest, and these Thy little rills
That know Thy voice are prattling unto Thee.
Oh, 'tis a holy time ! unto my soul
A benediction of unchanging love,
Waking the chords of memory and tears :
While softer, tenderer shines Thy aureole,
And one by one are lit Thy stars above,
To lead me on thro' darkness and thro' fears.

A Book of Poems

A
Presence When to the wind the wildrose lifts pure lips,
And in a quiet place the vireo sings,
While, molten gold, the dewy sunshine drips
Leaf-filtered on his happy song-thrilled wings —
When trumpet vines red-clustered on the hill
Blow joyous welcome to the huntress morn,
And fragrant-robed beside clear pools and still
The elder dreams o'er watched by ranks of corn —
I see her passing, samite-clad and fair,
With mists that melt into the golden air.

Nor is she absent from the wintry wood
Where frost-stars shine in all their loveliness,
She bringeth there her gracious gift of good,
She walketh there in beauty none the less.
Above her glow the heavens rosy cold,
To every twig there comes a clearer grace,
The moss is greener on the oak tree, old,
There is a welcome in each sheltered place —
And music there of mellow reeds and true
Whereon, one day, God Pan a parting blew.

O true beloved of the stars and fields
I would that I might follow where you lead!
O'er fresh-plowed earth, thro' all the happy wealds,
By sparkling waters in a fragrant mead.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A Or deep into the winter's crystal core,
Presence Or where the leaves fall, scarlet, red and gold;
(Continued) So I might follow — loving you the more,
Look in your face and with you converse hold.
I see you beckon, but with fettered feet
Far off I follow in your footsteps sweet.

A Book of Poems

The Silent, dark-browed, and cold you seem to me
Cedars Seen from this bright hillside where redbuds glow
In ardent beauty, and the winds that flow
In warmer currents bear to many a tree
A subtile impulse that exquisitely
Goes wavering upward till new blossoms blow
And tender tips of green the branches know
Melodious with the murmur of the bee.
Yet I forget not, thro' keen winter days
Your kindly arms outstretched did keep the herds,
And now within your pleasant rooms the birds
Watched o'er by you sing love's own tenderest lays;
Their nestlings safe, lulled by your whispered words
And that great wind-harp which a spirit plays.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Yule: Now upon the soul's broad hearthstone
Tide lay the crimson brands for lighting,
With the charm of touch and whisper
wake the bright warm-hearted flume,
Till it, rising, kisses softly all the
arches bending o'er it,
Till the wingéd sparks go singing thro'
the night Love's holy name.

Lusty mistletoe be bringing, boughs of
cedars, wreaths of holly ;
To each heart a cup of laughter
touched by gracious vestal lips,
Now the disc of every sorrow joy
shall circle with a halo,
As the sun hangs golden banners
round the shadow of eclipse.

Long within the soul, God's Temple, dark-
ness festooned hung forbidding,
Draped the windows barred and leaden,
draped the gnarled and studded door —
While with fitful flare and flicker
danced the Yule-light hollow hearted
As wild Superstition moving, dancing
on the stained floor.

A Book of Poems

Pule- Long the angry sparks sang : " Hatred ! "
Tide hate of brother unto brother ;

(Continued) Long the mistletoe was severed with
a sacrificial knife .

Sheathéd oft within the bosom
of a hapless human victim :

Telling of a hideous worship
and the creed of life for life.

But at last an oriel window set
toward the hills of morning,
Where with reverent brows uplifted
pray the mighty peaks of Hope,
Thrilled with prescient thrill of
glory as the Day Star shone upon it,
Thrilled as thrill a parent watcher
'neath a blessed horoscope.

Sudden dust that dropt and vanished
fell the rotten folds of darkness,
Thro' the oriels' veins translucent ran
a ruby current mild ;
Clusters, there, of roses blossomed, lilies
swung their snowy censers
O'er a mother, and a manger, and
the sweet face of a child.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Hyle: All the Temple was transfigured and

Tide a silent benediction

(Continued) Fell on cedar, fell on holly, fell
on pearl-strung mistletoe.

“God,” they murmured, “and not Odin,”

“Christ,” they murmured, “and not Balder,”

And awed Superstition, kneeling,
heard forgiveness whispered low.

Swung the door upon the hinges,
and the angels of God’s Heaven
Straightway came within the Temple
singing songs of holy cheer.

Sang they all of Jesus blessed,
sang they of His peace eternal
Spanning all the broken earth
clouds like an emerald rainbow clear.

Stay, sweet angels, ever singing carols
to my Lord and Saviour,

Sing: “He oped the orient portals
with a rosy baby hand!”

Sing: “He suffered more than
martyr, making earth with feet of sorrow,
While behind him joys and blessings
blossomed in the desert land!”

A Book of Poems

Bule:

APOSTROPHE.

Tide

(Continued)

Lord we stand upon the margin
of that ocean stretching outward
Far beyond the isles of knowledge,
far beyond the mount of Light —
Only Love can hear its billows
breaking on the shore Hereafter,
Only Faith can see Thy Heaven
bathed in everlasting light.

Then in this Thy dearest gift-time
when to us Thyself Thou gavest,
Give us Faith and Love to guide
us teaching of Heaven and Thee —
Lest we fall to idle talking with
doubt walking close beside us,
Lest we say, with Him: "Hope
never! all beyond is shoreless Sea!"

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

An Oh, the peach is in pink and in white is the cherry,
April And the pipe of the bluebird is mellow and merry,
Song And the little frogs cheep
From the green rushes, deep,
And the baby clouds lie in the blue fast asleep —
Asleep — While the bluebird is merry.

At the edge of the wood how the maple is glowing,
And the windflowers nod to the creek in its flowing,
And the sap's running free
In the heart of each tree,
And the little leaves laugh in their nest all alee —
Alee — and the creek answers, flowing.

A Book of Poems

October Dim are the emeralds of dead Summer's crown,
And to her throne, where rubies flash and glow,
October comes with queenly step and slow,
Pale asters braided in her tresses brown.
The blue curled banners of the mist hang down,
The milkweeds bolls are white with silken snow,
The thistle's silver argosies out-blow,
And insect voices chant their Queen's renown.
With tender eyes of happy, dreamful light
She looks abroad on spreading fallow lands,
On soft gray skies and wooded hillsides bright,
The aged Year's offering in her outstretched hands :
The partridge pipes a welcome : leaping white
The brook sings welcome from its leaf-strewn sands.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

My My heart with longing turns to meadows lowly,
heart That lie wood-broidered, in brown, twilight lands;
with Where come the constant stars, God's watchers holy,
Longing And Peace awaits me with dear welcoming hands.

My heart with longing turns to thoughts that guide me
To one white brook that knows the woodland ways,
Where thro' glad hours, with Poesy beside me,
I dream the dreams of June's bloom-scented days.

My heart with longing turns to sunsets burning
A splendid flame low thro' the frosty wood
Netted with naked twigs; ah, thither turning
I greet the oaks, a sturdy brotherhood.

The days we toil, the days we toil and languish
Brought slaves of Mammon, answering to his whip!
How much they bring of heartache, bitter anguish,
God's happiest children bear nor purse nor scrip.

But far away within some quiet valley
They walk with dawn, or darkness, led of stars
To thoughts of beauty, thoughts that musically
Fall soft as moonlight where no discord mars.

O God, of all this slavery I'm a-weary!
Thy hills, Thy fields, Thy streams, Thy winds are free:
While I, their master, in a bondage dreary,
Grind in the mills that shall at last grind me.

A Book of Poems

My Help me to break these bonds, these fetters galling !
Heart Lo ! on Thy hills, lit with a splendid light,
With Thou dost reveal Thyself, Thy glory falling
Longing About Thee as a garment flaming bright.
(Continued)

O Vision of Eternal Beauty, Vision Holy !
Blest is thy radiance on my longing heart —
A light to lighten me in pathways lowly
And I arise, for joy and strength Thou art.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A Mood I passed a lonely house upon a hill,
And in the west the winter sun was low—
While fragrant offering of the forest still
The thin, blue spirals of the smoke rose slow.

And then it seemed, I cannot tell thee how,
I was a brother to the trees and stood
With sturdy trunk and curved, up-reaching bough
One of the patriarchs of that gray old wood.

The days went by in veiled procession, dreams
Stirred in my fibre, dreams fantastic, dark,
Like deepest night lit by the fitful gleams
Of smouldering camp-fires in a forest stark.

I felt the touch of unseen finger-tips
Dim-sensed; a hand relaxed and cold;
I heard the babble of unmeaning lips,
And shivered groping downward in the mould.

What was it that I clasped there cloven thro'
With axe of stone? a something fleshless, round;
And memory waked within me and I knew
Long years before blood darkly stained this ground.

A Book of Poems

The Hills What dreams have these gray hills that silent lie,
The sun-bright cornfields rustling at their feet?
The wind that brings new color to the wheat
Puffing the snow-white argosies of the sky
Rain-laden for some distant land and dry?
Dream they of that dark time when, wild and fleet,
The storm rushed shrieking by, and burning sleet
Fell hissing in the floods, when lifted high
They took on form in agony of fire,
And sinking down their Titan Mother Earth
Seemed, groaning, with this labor to expire
Leaving them trembling in their swaddling girth?
See, sullenly behind them storm-clouds dire
Unbidden spectres of their fiery birth!

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The The red-wing blackbird, minstrel of the Spring,
Minstrel Returned, a wanderer from the Southland sang
In gusty hills of March his roundelay —

And all the greening hills were listening
To hear his mellow voice that sweetly rang
Across the meadow in a song so gay.

“ Love, love,” sang he, “ the sunbeam loves the dew,
The bee the blossom, and the tawny stream
Seeks broad lagoons the haunts of lilies fair.

“ The clouds all day lie nestling 'gainst the blue,
The glow-worms woo the stars, the tall oaks dream
Of April with a violet in her hair.

“ Seek out a mate ; soon redbuds on the hill,
And dogwoods white, will blossom ; build a nest
And weave into it all your brightest hopes.

“ No sweeter happiness the heart can fill,
No other way leads into such true rest ;
Seek out a mate, and up the sunny slopes

“ Of rainbowed lands go singing with your dear
Or by the misty willows o'er the brook
Where bright Spring-beauties open to the light.

“ Love, love,” sang he, “ 'tis love-time of the year,
And hearts are lost and won with but a look ;
Go build a nest while all the world is bright.”

A Book of Poems

Foretaste At eve, a worshiper, I stood
Within the temple of the wood.

Still thro' the western windows came
Long slender shafts of rosy flame.

Aeolian vespers breathéd low
Did tremble o'er my heart, and flow.

And kneeling reverently there
I felt the circling arms of prayer.

Then, mighty-voicéd harmony,
I heard a song of victory.

And from my soul an answering voice
Sang full of rapture: "Soul rejoice!"

"Rejoice, O Soul, for thou shalt see
The face of Immortality!"

And lifting up my chastened eyes,
Behold the walls of Paradise!

A misty splendor lifted white
Above the utmost peaks of Night.

Then failed my vision, but I knew
The voice within my soul was true.

And from the holy stars there fell
The benediction: "All is well!"

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The When shadows creep along the bar,
Killdee And in the rose there comes a star,
And trees grow black against the sky —
Where ripples break I hear him cry
Killdee ! Killdee !

He cuts the dusk with silver wings,
And round the level bar he swings,
And up and down in flashing flight
He screams across the van of Night —
Killdee ! Killdee !

Ah, memories that come to me
With thought of days no more to be ;
And tears, as floating with the stream
I hear him cry as in a dream —
Killdee ! Killdee !

A Book of Poems

Morning A dappled sky of gold and tender blue
Whereon are traced, an etching fine and rare,
A great elm's graceful top of fan-like flare
And one tall poplar rising straight and true ;
Now from deep cups of frost doth Youth renew
His lusty strength, and breasts the sparkling air,
While life beats high and earth's surpassing fair
With that old beauty which is ever new.
Ah me, my heart, we too must dance a spring
Here on the crisp, white sward, we, too, be young,
And wear no more the chains of lethargy —
Trim all our fancies to Hope's upward wing,
And live as joyously as brooks that tongue
Their silvery music, coursing down to sea.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Dawn A breath in the boughs, and the little
 leaves stirred in their sleep,
And the stars passed out in the gray of
 the eastern deep,
Then, woven by dreams, the rose, and
 the pearl, and the blue,
For the white feet of Dawn, and the
 dewdrops trembled and knew.

A Book of Poems

Longing

I'm sick of the smoky city
Where busy cares confine,
And I long for the mountain heights where sweet
Is the balmy breath of the pine.

Ah, there are the crystal fountains,
And there is a restful shrine ;
And there I would cease from toil, and breathe
The healing breath of the pine.

I'm sick of the endless battle
Oh, if parole were mine !
So far, far-off seem the heights of peace
Where the unstained banners shine !

I faint in the ceaseless conflict !
Great Captain strength is Thine !
Help, oh help ! that at last I may reach
Rest, rest on the hills Divine.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A No herald sounds his name,
Knight Unknown save to a few,
Yet is his armor bright,
And he is leal and true.

He strives, yet takes no shame
If he to dust be trod,
He strikes with all his might,
And leaves the rest with God.

A Book of Poems

Invitation When from the beeches, old,
 Flakes of red gold
Fall by the river, gray,
Or lightly drift away
Upon its current, cold, —
When from the dreaming world
 Passes the day —

When shadows drowse and sleep
 In hollows deep,
And quails pipe here and there,
And white frost stings the air, —
When bright leaves lie a-heap,
And winding woodways keep
 A welcome rare —

Come, when thro' Sundown's gate,
 Yet roseate,
The peaks of sunset land
Bathed in clear amber stand,
While Twilight's pennons wait,
Low-drooped, till Night, in state,
 Leads on her band.

Come, Sweetheart, then, to me
 With laughter free!
And on thy cheeks the glow
That April's redbuds know,

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Invitation Come in love's witchery,
Curls kissing lovingly
(Continued) Thy throat of snow!

Come! ah, my pulses feel
A rich warmth steal
Along them strangely sweet:
They know thy coming feet,
Thy laughter's silvery peal,
And to that music leal
Love's measures beat.

A Book of Poems

A
Spring
Road A ribbon spun of threads of gold
It winds thro' undulating green,
Gray mists sleep in the hollows, cold,
The ridges dance in jeweled sheen ;
Like roseate clouds the redbuds glow,
And thro' the woodlands, tinged with hope,
The dogwood's stars as pure as snow
Shine in a happy horoscope.

The mocking-bird is joyous there
In wild parabolas of song,
The oaks hang out their tassels fair,
And there glad-hearted blackbirds throng.
And when, as soft as thistle-down,
The dusk has fallen, comes, in white,
Sweet Hesper thro' the shadows, brown,
And scatters there the myrrh of night.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Audubon Not with clash of arms,
Not 'midst war's alarms,
Thy splendid work was done,
Thy great victory won.

Unknown, thro' field and brake,
By calm or stormy lake,
Lured by swift passing wings —
Songs that a new world sings —

Thou didst untiring go
Led by thine ardor's glow,
Cheered by thy kindling thought
Beauty thy hand had wrought.

Leaving thy matchless page
Gift to a later age
That would revere thy name —
Build for thee, surely, fame.

O to have been with thee,
In that wild life and free,
While all thy birds passed by
Under the new world sky !

O to have heard the song
Of that glad-hearted throng,
Ere yet the settlers came
Giving the woods to flame !

A Book of Poems

Audubon O to have with thee gone
(Continued) Up the white steps of Dawn !
Or where the burning west
Crimsoned the wild drake's breast !

Yet better than bays we bring
Are the woods whispering
When life and leaf are new
Under the tender blue !

Master, awake ! for May
Comes on her rainbowed way —
Hear thou bird-song again
Sweeter than praise of men !

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Serving O, Serving Brothers, in the fight
Brothers The foe will often taunt you !
But if your souls be strong and white
 There shall no danger daunt you !
A ring of fire your swords shall flame
Around your Leader's Cross and Name !

Then ask not for a nobler thing
 Than to be truly serving ;
To love that Spotless One, your King,
 With love that knows no swerving, —
To strike like Galahad the pure,
To murmur not and still endure.

Behold the battlements aglow
 Above the clouds that darkle !
And round the lifted domes of snow
 See fervent light out-sparkle !
The Holy City ! God waits there
To give you rest and garments fair.

A Book of Poems

Winter There is a beauty in the Winter sky
Days That Summer knows not, a diviner glow,
 A chaster coloring, and the hills of snow
 Are nearer Heaven than the hills that lie
 All indolent in bloom; the winds that sigh
 Thro' brakes of drifted leaves and murmur low
 Their threnodies, a peace more perfect know
 Than those that dally with the butterfly.
 Great thoughts are born in many a leafless way,
 And faith that fails not when the stars are hid;
 And courage steadfast as the rocks which break
 The ocean's rage—and spirits such as they
 Who built this land—earth's noblest pyramid,
 Which God forbid the storms of Time shall shake.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The With broken ranks and flags that fly no more
Retreat Like joyous falcons, the torn cornstalks go
Into the valley, sullenly and slow :
Yet on the hilltop stands the last tall corps,
The valiant rearguard battle-stained and sore
For this defeat, braving the hosts of snow
And charging sleet, while shrilly trumpets blow,
And overhead rolls on the steady roar
Of the Wind's artillery. O Love ! O Peace !
Blest be your coming to earth's battlefields
With seeds, that, springing, hide this wreek of war !
The golden harvests and the fair increase,
And that good measure which contentment yields ;
Till only greed and wrong shall men abhor.

A Book of Poems

After- The burial was over, and the words,
ward The blest, immortal words of Christ were said.
The neighbors had departed, he alone
Stood by the grave and watched the sunset flame,
And mused on life and death, and on the change
Now come to him, beholding her no more.
Close by his feet the violets bowed their heads
Like little children lisping evening prayers ;
The wind-flowers swung white censers, and a cloud,
Blown like a snow wreath o'er the deeps of blue,
Wore sudden glory and so passed away.
Ah, very oft he had come here with her
And watched the flowers and the greenening fields,
And dogwoods drifted white against the hills.
She had so loved the Spring, in simple faith
Accepting it as pledge of life to come ;
And ere she died was lifted up to see
Far thro' the open door the purple glow
Of redbuds waking at the forest's edge,
The bloom of nearer orchards, cherry, peach,
The flocking blackbirds and the April sky ;
The spicy-fragrant raindrops pattering loud
Upon the mossy roof, the Springtime sun
Flooding the trees with splendor, and she smiled,
And sinking on her pillow murmured oft
The lines of some loved anthem, and so slept.
O memory, memory, thro' what tender scenes

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

After: Misty with tears he walked again with her !
ward Low-voiced was she, and quaint, dear accents gave
(Continued) An old-time flavor to her homely speech ;
And all her hair was silvered, and her eyes
Held twinkling laughters in their deep blue depths
And largess of true tears for those who weep.
And oft she leaned upon him, saying : " Son
You are the staff of my old useless age
And God will bless you ! "

Homeward thro' the dusk
He, passing, treasured these sweet words of hers
And to his grief they were as precious balm.
So when he reached the creek where lightly spanned
The rustic bridge, a dear, familiar place,
There bubbled in his heart a song that flowed
To music of the ripples, thus it ran :

I follow on, I follow on,
The way I cannot see,
But all the day and all the night
Thou callest unto me,
And thro' the dusk, and thro' the light
I follow after thee.

I follow on, I follow on,
How loving are thy feet
That go before me in the way

A Book of Poems

After-

ward

(Continued)

Unto that valley sweet —
That valley where the blessed stay
And love is all complete.

I follow on, I follow on,
I know that thou art near;
My soul looks out upon thy soul
A vision sweet and clear —
About thy brow an aureole
My sainted mother, dear.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A I met my angel in a strange, wild place ;
Meeting I shall not soon forget his steadfast eyes,
Before whose gaze no mantle is disguise,
That fixed on mine, and yet meseemed love's grace
He gently wore, nor came he to abase
My stricken soul, nor with a scourge chastise :
But looked as Christ on Peter, sorrowful-wise,
Until with tear-stained eyes I hid my face,
To feel, at last, his hand upon my head,
To hear his words of admonition grave
That gave me strength as when true prayer is said —
That buoyed me up, a strong compelling wave
Of sympathy, that whereat I was dead
I lived again thro' cheer and hope he gave.

A Book of Poems

Septem-ber Delightful days are these when Autumn masks
In Summer's mantle and with sun-tipped wand
Days Waves off the jeweled daggers of the frost.
Now from their setting of the lustiest green
Glow the flame flowers of geranium ;
The amorous cypress holding up his arms
Would clasp the stars, the wanton touch-me-nots,
Gay revelers in red and pink, and white,
Hobnob together, and a conscious rose
Blushes as if 'twere Springtime ; scarce a leaf
Falls withered from the maples, and the Wind
Oft fluttering down from some far height of snow
Fans with its fragrant wings the brow of Earth.
With patient love the Morning-Glory lifts
Her shrunken palms aloft in prayer for dew.
Long gossamers blow silvern in the sun,
Or link the sturdy corn that half is clad
In russet-gray and half in youthful green —
Far-off, a golden band, the woodland belts
The quiet pastures where the cattle browse ;
And yet beyond are hills that purpling rise
In low, round billows broken, here and there,
By giant branches flung against the sky
In silhouette ; and then the softer haze —
Where Earth and Heaven meet — that unknown land
The dwelling-place of mystery and dreams.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A And it's hey and it's ho for the frost-white hills
Morning And a splendid star in the rose o' the dawn,
Song And a sense of brawn, and a thought that thrills,
And the song of a bird in the treetops heard —
And it's hey and it's ho for the frost-white hills !

And it's hey and it's ho for the sunrise paths !
When the light drips down in a golden shower ;
And a sense of power, and the dewdrop baths,
And the blood running free like the sap in a tree—
And it's hey and it's ho for the sunrise paths !

And it's hey and it's ho for the upland way !
Where white and cool are the wings o' the mist,
Where our lips are kissed by the maiden Day,
And life has a spring like a bow a-string,
Oh, it's hey and it's ho for the upland way.

A Book of Poems

The *Scene.* — Moonrise in the garden of Yucay.
Inca's Oello discovered seated near a parterre wrought in
Daugh- silver and gold in imitation of growing maize.
ter The plashing of a fountain is faintly heard.

OELLO.

“How pleasant 'tis to feel upon my brow
The soothing touch of gentle guardian winds
That tiptoe thro' these quiet halls of Night.
How fragrant are their garments, and they sow
Bright seeds of pleasantness that spring in dreams,
And 'peace' they ever murmur — 'rest and
peace.'”

(Francisco steps noiselessly from the shadow
and kneels at her feet.)

OELLO.

“Francisco !”

FRANCISCO.

“Yes, dear love, fear not, 'tis I.”

OELLO.

“Why art thou come? An hundred jealous eyes
Watch here, and from these flowery walls may
spring
Swift, thirsting arrows winged with bitter hate !”

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The
Inca's
Daughter
(Continued)

FRANCISCO.

“ But one brief hour ! Thou'lt not deny me that ? ”

OELLO.

“ Ah, tempt me not with such a priceless hour,
Most radiant jewel on the breast of Time !
Lest, yielding, I should lose thee evermore ! ”

FRANCISCO.

“ One moment, then ! See wrought upon this
scarf,

In richest tracery of gold, a cross,
Thou dost remember, dear, that pleasant day
I lingered by thy side and thou did'st ask
The meaning of this symbol, and I told
Of my sweet Lord, Jesu, the only God.
This scarf I always wear, this symbol pressed
Close to my heart ; to-morrow night I'll send
To thee, with this, Huascar of thy race,
I saved his life at Cuzco, come with him.
And then — dear heart — ”

OELLO.

“ I hear the war drums beat ! ”

FRANCISCO.

“ One kiss ! ”

A Book of Poems

The

OELLO.

Inca's
Daugh-

ter " Francisco, O my love, farewell ! "

ter

Scene.—Night in the palace of Yucay.

(Continued)

Enter Oello with her father and his nobles. After a short prelude a minstrel sings.

SONG.

" In the thickest of the battle,
In the fiercest of the fight,
Where the lines are locked and writhing
And the whirring arrows smite,
Cheering on the hearts beneath it,
As it crests the battle's wave,
There is seen the rainbow banner
Of the bravest of the brave.

" Where the bucklers clash together,
And the battle-axes, red,
Rise and fall, and bloodier, faster,
Pile the awful heaps of dead,
Where the gushing tides of crimson
All the trampling sandals lave,
There outgleams the *coraquenque*
Of the bravest of the brave."

THE INCA.

" Thou'rt listless, Oello, a battle won

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The Should'st make thy step more buoyant, light thine
Inca's eye
Daugh- With beams exultant, make thy cheek to glow,
ter And thrill thy soul with songs of victory.
(Continued) Thou'rt pale! thou'rt cold! A daughter thou of
kings

And heard'st yon minstrel chant thy father's praise,
And hid'st thy face and sighed. It was not well!"

OELLO.

"O noble Inca — father —"

THE INCA.

"Speak not now!

Thy voice hath lost its music, it is faint,
Uncertain like a harp by novice touched.
Sit here and thou shalt hear me speak instead.
Perchance, to hear thy father tell the fight,
Thou'lt get more courage in that downcast eye.
Before the tassels of this morn shook down
Rich golden pollen on the silent hills,
Our bravest, stepping cougar-like, marched thro'
The city gate, and gained the wooded slope
Behind the Spanish camp — Each heart beat quick,
Each hand was clenched on battle-axe or bow,
Each nostril quivered and each eye was set
To look on death. There in the dew-dusk lay

A Book of Poems

The The hated foe — asleep save here and there
Inca's A spectral picket glided back and forth.
Daugh- Then shield to shield, a line of plumes that tossed
ter Like tall maize shaken by a sudden wind,
(Continued) We rushed upon them beating them to earth.
 Some shrieking fled, some snatched their arms and
 fought
 As fights the Oscelet, hedged round with spears.
 One warrior among them, gleaming bright
 In burnished metal silver-like and fair,
 O'er threw five nobles, shouting his war-cry.
 Then, coming in the press, I dashed my shield
 Upon his head and struck him with my axe.
 He, reeling, fell, and fallen rose no more.
 This fabric, richer than Vicuna gives,
 He wore upon his breast — See Oello !”

(He shows Francisco's Scarf.)

“Lift up thine eyes, see here this figure wrought
In gold upon — Why thou art trembling — What !
Speak to me my daughter !”

(To attendants.) “There, tenderly,
Let her be carried hence, strange humor this,
I will know more of it.”

(Exit.)

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

At Here dwelleth peace and quiet such as lies
Wash- About the steps of Dusk when far afield,
ington's And he sleeps well for whom the cannon pealed,
Grave And bugles blew their wild, war melodies.
Now glossy tendrils of the ivy rise
To clasp his name and wreath his honored shield,
The pilgrim seasons here their tribute yield;
And stars keep watch with bright unsleeping eyes;
And one white shaft, as stainless as his name
We hold the first, bears witness with this spot,
That they who met the battle's shock and flame
For truth and country shall not be forgot.
Sweet be their rest and ever pure their fame,
And theirs the glory of the heroes' lot.

A Book of Poems

Sunset Marvelous color ! violet and gold,
on the Rare rose, pale emerald, and tranquil blue,
River Long radiate streamers of a fiery hue,
 A wealth of Argonaut fleeces fold on fold,
 All mirrored by the river and far rolled,
 In softer splendor than the sky e'er knew,
 Against the fringing willows that imbrue
 Their blossomy branches in the ripples cold.
 Our oars drop jewels, and our widening wake
 Flecked with bright foam, melts, purpling, into rest.
 The swift-winged kildees silvery circles make
 Against this old, new glory of the West.
 Now dreams hold tryst, and Dusk's handmaidens shake
 Fragrance and dewdrops down on Night's warm breast.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The It lies beyond and ever yet beyond !
Anat- The stars are but bright milestones on the way ;
tainable The patient climbing feet of eons gray,
That reach it not, grow weary and despond ;
Yet doth it draw us with its mystic bond
Through life, through death, and we its will obey,
And, gazing thitherward, our souls for aye
Pass up and onward from old lessons conned.
Thus is our happiness in endless quest,
Our Heaven in striving for some higher sooth,
In going on our everlasting rest
And all the vigor of immortal youth
That follows alway with unflagging zest
The strong, white pinions of the angel Truth.

A Book of Poems

The Here in the quiet hills beside the way
Deserted That dips into the valley, lone it stands;
House It's doors gape wide, and from their gloom and gray
 The beckoning of unseen hands.

Tall weeds surround it ashy-crowned and still,
And from a walnut near the rain-crow calls,
And one dark shadow, sinuous and chill,
Across the sagging gable crawls.

The way is o'ergrown where many feet
Passed up and down; where oft I climbed to her
When day had fallen and the fields were sweet,
Dewy sweet in the twilight's blur.

Now — woods with buds will brighten, and the leaves
Drift down in shining showers far and near,
And afterward a wandering voice which grieves
The passing glory of the year.

But nevermore along the hillside path
To greet me coming shall I see her face;
And I am left with but love's aftermath,
A memory of tender grace.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A Deed Ah, oftentimes I see her kneeling there
Before the Saviour, and a perfume sweet
Diffuses from the ointment on His feet
That she is gently wiping with her hair,
And to my soul no vision is more fair ;
Prophetic love that hears the hammers beat
On cruel nails, and sees the winding sheet,
And thus the Lord for burial would prepare.
Oh, Mary, thou hast given the world a deed
More precious than thy spikenard, keeping still
Its holy beauty in these far-off years !
And burdened hearts, and weary feet that bleed
Bless thy soft touch, Love's fragrance that doth fill
The world's great room, the sympathy of thy tears.

A Book of Poems

A How fair the moon is this calm Summer night,
Summer Like some young Queen borne in a stately barge
Night Upon a clear, deep lake with silvery marge
And fairy, floating islands snowy white
Touched with faint tints of iridescent light.
Meseems she sleeps, and each with pearly targe
Her maidens hold her loveliness in charge
That dreams may woo her into realms more bright.
Come all ye spirits of the dusk and dew,
Of leaves, of stars, of winds that whisper low ;
With sweet influences her sleep imbue
Till in love's ecstasy her pulses glow.
Soft, soft she passes out into the blue,
And all the night doth richer beauty know.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

Good I clasp your hands, good brother trees,
Brother Your welcome is full sweet ;
Trees I'm weary of the ways of men,
I rest me at your feet.

They call you cold, they call you dumb,
But they — they cannot know
The speech we have, the golden speech
That sets our hearts aglow.

Men have their little plans and fight,
And bicker over God,
You know where'er a flower blooms
That way the Master trod.

A Book of Poems

Affinity A soul that strayed in the paths of Heaven,
A seraph soul on his lonely way,
Chanting his song in the purple even —
(A sad, sweet lay)
Sang : “ Let me die for I am weary,
Let me darkling fall for my life is dreary.”

Then up from the twilight world at his feet,
Up from the purple deeps of Even,
There came a voice, ah, tenderly sweet,
Into his Heaven :
“ Live for me, love, or my life is dreary,
Live for me, love, or my way is weary.”

And flower-like, in a dewy vale,
All beautiful with love's own grace,
Thro' bright'ning mists, and lily pale
He saw her face.
“ O, love, without thee my life is weary,
And the paths of God's Heaven are darkly dreary ! ”

And nightly he like a star in Heaven,
All radiant with thoughts of her,
Looks down thro' the purple deep of Even
Her worshiper.
“ Oh, love, without thee my life is weary,
Oh, love, without thee my Heaven is dreary.”

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The The wind and the leaves all day, all day,
Wind The wind and the restless leaves,
and the Have lain asleep in a valley deep,
Leaves In a valley deep where a spirit grieves
In a wood that is old and gray.

And bright-browed dreams all day, all day,
Have walked in that valley deep —
In the winding miles of the dim-lit aisles,
In the dim-lit aisles where abideth sleep,
In the wood that is old and gray.

And the wind is a woodman bold and gay
And the leaves are his tawny pack;
Hello and hark! when the wood is dark,
When the wood is dark and the storm clouds black
With a rush they are off and away.

Yet often they frolic at play, at play,
In that moss-loving valley deep —
When their hearts are light, and the moon all in white,
The moon all in white on a cloud-blown steep
Like a dream-loving maid doth stray.

And oft in the fragrant calm all day
The wind and the restless leaves
Lie fast asleep, in that valley deep,
In that valley deep where a shadow weaves
Slumber robes cool and gray.

A Book of Poems

The And the bright-browed leaves all day, all day,
Wind Walk then in that valley deep,
and the In the winding miles of the dim-lit aisles,
Leaves In the dim-lit aisles where abideth sleep
(Continued) In the wood that is old and gray.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

A Little How fair it is, this little lake of mine,
Lake This little mirror in God's pleasant room —
 Set round with willows, where primroses bloom
 In whose still depths the white clouds softly shine.

The lilac sky of sunset and the glow
 Of cumulus peaks here underneath the green
 That wavers downward, in new beauty seen
Melt into twilight, and the stars below

Seem like great pearls in purple casket set,¹
 Or like white cressets in a vale of dreams
 That beckon ever with their misty gleams
Down into silence where our hearts forget.

Here sings the yellow-throat: "Follow me! follow
 me," sings
 From leafy coverts dewy cool and still.
 The cardinal flashes by — and halcyon shrill
Touches the water into widening rings.

A brook comes hither, wandering down the glade,
 A troubadour of laughter making gay
 The lusty maples, singing all the way,
And here down-flashing in a bright cascade.

A Book of Poems

A Little Lake Here morning pauses glancing down to see
Her own fair image in this placid deep.
(Continued) Here silent mists their long night-watches keep
Weaving wide silver nets of witchery.

It is a place to linger in to hear
The message of the wind so gently told
Beneath thick branches, and communion hold
With Beauty shepherd of each day and year.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

The The sigh of the wind in the trees,
Grave in The glory of light in the air,
the A day that is quiet and fair —
forest These are above thee, these

With the spirit of peace are here
Over thy nameless sod.
Here bends the golden-rod,
The woodpecker taps his cheer.

Here at the foot of an oak
Silently taking thy rest,
Forgotten the hand that was pressed
Forgotten the voice that spoke.

Cheerily the cricket sings,
Sweet is the touch of the Fall,
Joyous the Flicker's call,
Happy the passing wings.

If they could greet thee again
Would'st thou awake and be glad,
After the day thou hast had
Walking the ways of men?

Is all of light and of mirth
Sweet as this lying down?
Beauty, or wealth, or renown
Good as this mingling with earth?

A Book of Poems

The Softly the sunlight streams
Grave in Out from the sundown land,
the Gently an unseen hand
Forest Draws me to night and to dreams.
(Continued)

Thou — has it not drawn thee
On to the ultimate dawn?
Thou into shadow gone
Dost thou not truly see?

Softly the sunlight dies
In the far sundown land,
Gently an unseen hand
Draws me and I arise.

Cheerily the cricket sings
Sweet is the touch of the Fall,
Joyous the Flicker's call,
Trustful the passing wings.

Beneath Blue Skies and Gray

In the Clouds and a misty day,
After: Now, with the passing sun
glow Amber and rose for the gray,
When day is done.

Here on the margin of night,
Darkness lying before,
Peace, and the beauty of light
When day is o'er.

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